

Research on the influence of brand personification on value co creation ---- On the adjustment of brand values

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Abstract: Based on literature research, this paper proposes to divide brand personification into two dimensions to study the influence and mechanism of different types of brand personification on consumer value co creation. In addition, the introduction of customer integration behavior as an intermediary variable, the brand values as a regulatory variable of customer integration behavior on value co creation behavior, and the brand values are divided into two dimensions of objective values and functional values, respectively, to explore the regulatory role of different dimensions. Through the analysis and research, this paper believes that brand personification can positively affect value co creation behavior, customer involvement behavior plays a positive intermediary role in brand personification and value co creation behavior, and brand values can positively regulate the role of customer involvement behavior in value co creation behavior.

1. Introduction

Since the 1970s, great changes have taken place in the enterprise value system. Through the establishment of a new value system, the enterprise takes customers as the center of the value system, and takes customer experience and customer perceived value as the goal of the enterprise [1]. Michael Porter put forward in competitive advantage that the only source of competitive advantage is to create value for customers. According to the theory of value co creation, it is more important for an enterprise to enhance the customer perceived value of its products than the value created by its external marketing. Under the social background of the continuous development of Internet technology and the increasing network externality of consumers, the theory of value co creation has attracted more and more attention of scholars. In recent years, more and more enterprises are trying to use the platform business model transformation to let more consumers participate in all aspects of product design, production and sales equivalent value chain, and successfully create greater value for enterprises by providing products more in line with consumer expectations [2]. However, although in theory, in practice, only a few consumers can actively participate in the value co creation activities. Therefore, how to encourage and encourage consumers to actively participate in value co creation activities is still an important problem that enterprises need to solve [3].

In fact, in recent years, brand personification has become an important marketing means for businesses. The common personification means is to integrate human image, emotion and attitude into the brand [4]. For example, Microsoft group's "Microsoft Xiaobing", "Xiaodu youth" liquor, three squirrels, dragonflies FM, etc. all use anthropomorphic design for brand positioning and shaping. Brand personification has become a common means and skill of brand marketing in the digital era.

However, can brand personification effectively stimulate and influence the co creation of consumer value? If so, what are its specific action paths and intermediate links? In view of these problems, there have been some researches in theory, such as Xie Zhipeng and Wang Tao, who take the degree of autonomy as intermediary variable, and find that personification of products with low luxury level and friendly facial expression can lead to higher consumer product evaluation than

aggressive expression [5]; reavey and Puzakova (2018) studies that subtle humanization makes people's overall positive attitude towards advertising more positive than direct humanization and unmanned conditions. Zhu Liangjie, he Jiaxun and Huang Haiyang (2018) proposed from the perspective of brand consistency that when the values of consumers and brands are consistent, brand personification can improve the level of brand integration of consumers more than non personification, so as to more effectively promote the common creative aspirations of consumer values. But it ignores the multi-dimensional concept of brand personification and brand concept. Therefore, this paper aims to further explore the influence of brand personification and multi-dimensional brand values on brand value co creation.

2. Journals reviewed

2.1 Brand Personification

Anthropomorphism refers to endowing the emotion, appearance and behavior characteristics of human or other animals with objects other than human beings. Previous research mainly focused on appearance and shape. With the continuous development of theory and practice, brand personification gradually permeates social attributes. For example, Chen et al. (2017) found that consumers who like personification products mainly point to those consumers who want to establish relationships with others in their hearts [6]; Reimann et al. (2017) pointed out that if there is a close interpersonal relationship like Brand relationship is more conducive to reducing the physical pain of consumers [7].

On the dimension division of brand personification, Aggarwal and McGill (2012) classified brand personification image into "partner" and "servant" according to the status relationship between brand and consumer [8]; Chen Zengxiang and Yang Guangyu (2017) classified it into "ability" and "enthusiasm" by using the stereotype content model (SCM) in social perception theory [9]. SCM points out that the content of stereotype is a combination of competence and warmth. According to Fiske (1999), the dimension of stereotype comes from the interaction between people and groups. In the face of other individuals or groups, people always want to know the behavior intention and ability of others, that is, enthusiasm and ability.

Enthusiasm means that a brand presents a warm and sincere image to consumers through personification. Competence means that a brand leaves an impression of its ability, wisdom and high professionalism to consumers through personification [10]. At present, there are few researches on the anthropomorphic dimensions of enthusiasm type and ability type, so the specific mechanism needs to be further explored.

Based on the above research and analysis of the previous literature, this paper decided to divide the brand personification image into two dimensions: enthusiasm and ability, and further explore its impact on brand value co creation.

2.2 Customer integration behavior

With the development of marketing theory, customers have gradually changed from passive recipients of value to active participants in creating value together. MSI (American Academy of marketing Sciences) believes that customers participate in various activities of brand and enterprise activities besides purchase, which can effectively establish the relationship between enterprises and customers, and ultimately achieve the effect of improving enterprise performance. Hollebeek (2011) defined customer involvement behavior as the degree of consumer's cognitive, emotional and behavioral engagement in brand interaction; Vivek et al. (2012) pointed out that customer involvement includes both customer experience and experience, as well as the participation of existing and potential customers. Xie Wei and Liu Ting (2018) summarized that the antecedent variables of customer integration include information demand, social demand, self-improvement and customer satisfaction at the customer level; economic stimulation, employee integration and interaction platform at the enterprise level. The results of customer integration include positive and

negative aspects. For example, customer integration can improve the financial and non-financial performance of an enterprise, but negative customer integration behavior may also lead to a series of negative effects. Secondly, if new customers who do not conform to the brand image experience discomfort, they may spread negative word-of-mouth and related behaviors, thus damaging the brand voice Reputation [11].

The purpose of this paper is to propose and explore whether the customer involvement behavior plays an intermediary role in the co creation of consumer brand value in the two different image brands of enthusiasm personification and ability personification, as well as the specific mechanism.

2.3 Value co creation

In marketing, value creation refers to the process of continuously creating the efficacy and emotional experience contained in commodities in order to bring benefits to consumers and promote the sales of products. Based on the different understanding of the subject status of value creation, it mainly includes three kinds of value co creation logic, namely, enterprise leading logic. The core is to regard production enterprises as the core of value creation in marketing activities, so consumers are excluded from the process of value creation and only as users of value; the status of enterprises and customers has changed with the co creation logic dominated by enterprises. Consumers are regarded as the important "instrumental resources" owned by enterprises. Enterprises can stimulate and encourage consumers to participate in the process of value creation of enterprises. The co creation logic, which is dominated by consumers' participation and interaction, holds that consumers, by using their own resources and resources provided by enterprises, dominate and control the creation of product value, ultimately achieve for themselves The process of creating value and solving problems. Xi Luyang (2018) established a brand value co creation system model dominated by consumers' participation in interaction. He believed that the core path of enterprise brand value co creation under the logic of consumers' participation in interaction included interactive customization, that is, to meet consumers' personalized needs through personalized brand products; secondly, to build a platform to strengthen brand cohesion through the establishment of a brand community; and The second is co creation management, specifically, enterprises strengthen brand communication performance through interaction and incentive [12].

Through reading a large number of literature, this paper believes that brand personification can attract and stimulate the brand integration of consumers, deepen the impression and understanding of the brand through continuous integration and understanding of the brand, deepen the impression and understanding of the brand in emotion and values, improve the performance of brand communication in the interaction between enterprises and consumers, strengthen the cohesion of the brand, and finally realize the co creation of brand value.

2.4 Brand values

Brand values are very important for building and maintaining high-quality brands. Under the same conditions, different values will drive people to make different behaviors. Therefore, consumers with different values will have different behaviors for purchase and other non purchase behaviors. At present, there are two kinds of research on the measurement of brand values: Based on the measurement scale of consumer values, to measure whether the values of consumers and brands are consistent; based on the measurement scale of organizational values, to measure the consistency of enterprise employees and brand values. In view of the purpose of this paper is to study the integration behavior and value co creation behavior of consumers towards brand personification, therefore, the brand values studied in this paper are based on the measurement of consumer values. The commonly used consumer value measurement scale is shown in table 1.

Table 1. Summary of brand values

Gauge	Measurement dimension
Hawkins, Best and Coney Consumer values scale	It can be divided into three dimensions: others oriented values; environment oriented values; self oriented values
Hee-Woong Kim Customer value scale	It includes three dimensions: functional value, emotional value and social value
Rokeach Values scale	Values are the long-term tenets of people's life and actions, which lead consumers' behaviors at a deeper level. Values are divided into objective values and functional values.

The brand values measurement scale adopted in this paper refers to Rokeach values scale, and divides the dimensions of brand values into objective values and functional values. This paper holds that the consistency of consumer and brand values will further affect consumer's brand integration behavior. Only in the process of brand integration, through further understanding and recognition of brand value, consumers will have value co creation behavior. On the contrary, if consumers realize that there are conflicts and differences between brand values and their own values with the deepening of brand integration, then consumers will not continue to integrate, so they will not further participate in the brand value co creation activities of enterprises.

3. Hypothesis and model presentation

3.1 The main effect of brand personification on value co creation

Through a large number of literature reading, through the research of brand personification and value co creation behavior, it is not difficult to find the internal mechanism. On the one hand, from the perspective of the process of brand interaction, brand personification embodies the form and characteristics of customer brand interaction, while value co creation emphasizes the results of this interaction process. On the other hand, from the perspective of the psychological needs of consumers, brand personification can meet the psychological needs of consumers' social interaction and understanding of the external environment to a certain extent through the external interaction and internal psychological interaction between the two, while value co creation behavior is the internal positive emotion aroused after the psychological needs of consumers are satisfied to a certain extent. The act of CO creating value resulting from this emotion. Brand personification can be divided into different types. Can different types of personification have a positive impact on consumer value co creation? Therefore, this paper divides brand personification into two dimensions, and further explores the internal mechanism of brand personification and value co creation.

Based on this logic, this paper proposes the hypothesis:

H1: brand personification has a positive impact on value co creation;

H1a: enthusiasm brand personification has a positive impact on value co creation;

H1b: ability brand personification has a positive impact on value co creation.ain effect of brand personification on value co creation

3.2 Intermediary role of customer involvement

This paper argues that when consumers have a positive response to a certain type of brand personification, it can promote the integration of consumers into the brand. The brand integration behavior of consumers can effectively measure the important variables of the interaction between consumers and brands. The higher the degree of integration of consumers, the more they will actively recommend brands, and more actively participate in brand value creation.

Therefore, this paper puts forward the hypothesis:

H2: customer involvement behavior mediates brand personification and value co creation.

3.3 The moderating effect of brand values in customer integration and value co creation

The existing researches mainly focus on the effect of the consistency of brand values on consumer brand integration behavior and consumer value co creation behavior, rarely divide brand values into dimensions, and then study the regulatory effect of different dimensions of brand values on value co creation behavior. This paper argues that different brand values, in the process of deepening consumer brand integration behavior, play a regulatory role in consumer value co creation behavior.

This paper divides brand values into objective values and functional values, and puts forward the following assumptions:

H3: brand values can positively regulate the influence of customer involvement on value co creation;

H3a: objective values can positively regulate the influence of customer involvement on value co creation;

H3b: functional values can positively regulate the impact of customer involvement on value co creation.

Based on the above assumptions, this paper proposes the following conceptual model:

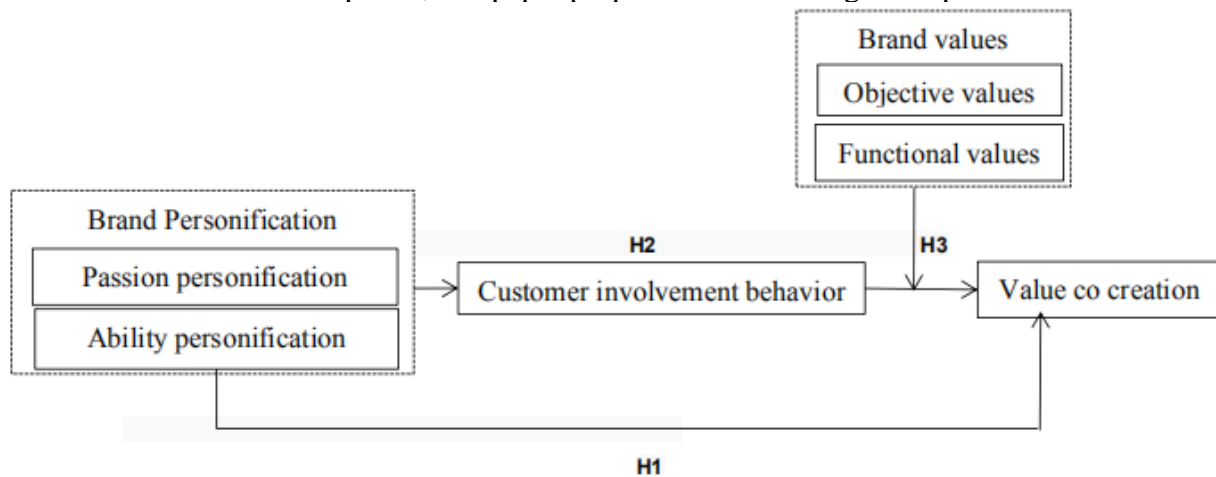


Figure 1. Conceptual Model

4. Innovation and deficiency

The innovations of this paper are as follows: 1. When discussing the mechanism of brand personification image on consumers' participation in brand value co creation, most of the researches focus on the adjustment of brand value consistency. In this paper, the same brand values as the moderating variable, but it also subdivides its dimensions to further study whether there are differences in the moderating effects of different types of brand values; 2. This paper is different from previous studies, the main role of values is in the process of consumer brand integration behavior, rather than in the beginning of consumer contact with anthropomorphic brand. In other words, whether the values of consumers are consistent with the values of brands, or the interaction between them should occur after the integration of consumers' brands. Only when the design concept, personality characteristics and brand attitude of brands are fully understood in the process of integration, can we decide whether to take further actions, that is, actively promote brands, participate in brand design and other value co creation behaviors.

At the same time, the shortcomings of this paper are mainly reflected in: The research of this paper is limited to through literature reading, analysis and research, and then put forward assumptions and models, without specific empirical research and verification, lack of persuasion and credibility.

5. Research significance and future prospects

The theoretical significance of this study is to summarize and comment on the future research of brand personification on brand value co creation behavior, summarize the existing research progress and the field that has not been studied, and provide the model, enlightenment, direction and dimension for future research.

The practical significance of this paper is: on the one hand, when enterprises adopt the brand personification marketing method, they should consider which kind of personification method should be adopted to promote the brand integration behavior of consumers; on the other hand, on the basis of the brand integration of consumers, enterprises should adopt reasonable and effective methods to convey the values of enterprises to customers, so that consumers can understand the values of enterprises accurately, It has a consistent interaction with the values of consumers, and then stimulates consumers to participate in value co creation activities.

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